

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 IO-14 ISO-00 AID-20 CEA-02 CIAE-00 COME-00

EB-11 FRB-02 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 CIEP-02 SPC-03

STR-08 TRSE-00 LAB-06 SIL-01 SAM-01 OMB-01 AGR-20 L-03

H-03 SS-20 NSC-07 DRC-01 /162 W
----- 022523

R 071621Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8500

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION OECD PARIS

USMISSION GENEVA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, EAGR, EEC, UK

SUBJECT: EC WINE POLICY

REF: STATE 111357, JUNE 9, 1973

1. ON MARCH 5, WE CALLED ON J. R. CATFORD
(ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR FOOD AND DRINK INDUSTRIES,
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE) TO DISCUSS EC WINE POLICY.
WE MADE IT CLEAR THAT WE WERE NOT RAISING THIS MATTER
ON INSTRUCTIONS, AND THAT WE MERELY WANTED TO LET
HMG KNOW THAT CERTAIN EC WINE REGULATIONS ARE CAUSING
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PROBLEMS FOR US, AND THAT WE HAVE BEEN DISCUSSING THESE

PROBLEMS WITH THE COMMISSION.

2. WE OUTLINED THE PROSPECTS FOR INCREASED WINE PRODUCTION IN THE UNITED STATES OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS. WHILE MOST OF THIS INCREASE WAS DESIGNED TO MEET DOMESTIC DEMAND, WE EXPECTED THAT OUR EXPORTS OF WINE WOULD ALSO INCREASE ABOVE THEIR PRESENT, RELATIVELY MODEST LEVELS. WE SAID THAT THE US CONSIDERS THAT THE COMMUNITY'S WINE CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS WOULD SERIOUSLY RESTRICT OUR EXPORTS, AND THAT THEY WOULD DO SO IN AN ARBITRARY WAY THAT APPARENTLY SERVES NO ONE'S INTERESTS. WE SUMMARIZED THE TALKS THAT US OFFICIALS HAVE HAD WITH THE COMMISSION SINCE LAST SPRING, AND GAVE CATFORD, ON AN INFORMAL BASIS, A COPY OF THE US NOTE OF JUNE 14, 1973 (REFTEL). WE STRESSED THE DESIRABILITY OF SOLVING THE WINE CERTIFICATION PROBLEM NOW, WHEN IT CAN BE DONE CALMLY, INSTEAD OF WAITING UNTIL US EXPORTS INCREASE AND WINE BECOMES A MORE SENSITIVE ISSUE.

3. CATFORD REPLIED THAT SINCE THE BRITISH ARE CONSUMERS, AND NOT PRODUCERS, OF WINE, THEY ARE IN FULL SYMPATHY WITH US EFFORTS TO GET THE EC IMPORT CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS CHANGED. CATFORD SAID THAT, SPEAKING FRANKLY, HMG CONSIDERS THE EC CRITERIA "PRETTY ARBITRARY." SINCE THE REGULATION WENT INTO EFFECT LAST OCTOBER, HE SAID, BRITISH CUSTOMS OFFICIALS HAVE BEEN ADMITTING SHIPMENTS OF US WINE DESPITE THE LACK OF PROPER CERTIFICATION. THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT CANNOT CONTINUE TO DO THIS INDEFINITELY, HOWEVER, SINCE IN DOING SO IT IS VIOLATING COMMUNITY LAW AND COULD BE TAKEN BEFORE THE EC COURT OF JUSTICE. CATFORD SAID THAT THE UK HAS RECEIVED NO COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION STATING THAT THE CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS HAVE BEEN TEMPORARILY SUSPENDED. FROM A LEGAL POINT OF VIEW, THEY ARE FULLY IN EFFECT. CATFORD CONCLUDED BY SAYING THAT HMG HOPED THE US WOULD KEEP UP ITS PRESSURE ON THE COMMISSION TO GET THE REGULATION CHANGED.

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R 071621Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8501

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4. CATFORD NOTED THAT THE COMMISSION HAS PROPOSED A REGULATION WHICH ESTABLISHES RULES FOR ENOLOGICAL PRACTICES IN THE COMMUNITY. THIS WOULD AMEND REGULATION 816. HE SAID THAT HMG WOULD BE INTERESTED IN KNOWING WHETHER ANY ASPECTS OF THIS REGULATION WOULD CAUSE PROBLEMS FOR US EXPORTS. IF SO, HE INDICATED THAT THE BRITISH WOULD BE WILLING TO ARGUE AGAINST THEM.

5. CATFORD ALSO SAID THAT THE BRITISH EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON WILL, IN THE NEAR FUTURE, RAISE WITH THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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USG THE PROBLEM OF DOCUMENTATION PROCEDURES UNDER

EC REGULATION 1769. CATFORD SAID THAT UNDER THE TERMS OF THIS REGULATION, IT IS MUCH SIMPLER FOR BRITISH IMPORTERS IF INCOMING WINE SHIPMENTS HAVE "MARKED CLOSURES;" (I.E., THE NAME OR ADDRESS OF THE SUPPLIER, OR SOME RECOGNIZED CODE NUMBER, PRINTED ON THE CORKS). IF INCOMING SHIPMENTS OF WINE DO NOT HAVE MARKED CLOSURES, BRITISH IMPORTERS WILL BE LESS WILLING TO HANDLE THEM, SINCE THEY WILL BE REQUIRED TO GO THROUGH AN ELABORATE DOCUMENTATION PROCEDURE.

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To: STATE
Type: TE
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